

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Cancelled).

2. (Previously Presented) Method for establishing a connection between a calling party and a called party in a H.323 network wherein the gatekeepers are arranged in a hierarchical manner, the method comprising:

receiving by a first gatekeeper a Set-up command issued from a connected calling user,

performing a user location algorithm by said first gatekeeper on its locally attached users,

if this algorithm fails, sending a Location Request message to its lower level gatekeepers, wherein each lower level gatekeeper performs an user location algorithm on its attached users and lower level gatekeepers,

if these user location algorithms fail, sending a Location Request message to its higher level gatekeeper, which performs an user location algorithm on its attached users and gatekeepers except the originating gatekeeper,

if one of the user location algorithms succeeds, the gatekeeper concerned a Location Confirm message to the first gatekeeper,

the first gatekeeper sending a Set-up message to the gatekeeper which has issued the Location Confirm message, which gatekeeper forwards said Set-up message to the called user, whereupon said connection is established.

3. (Previously Presented) Method for establishing a connection between a calling party and a called party in a H.323 network wherein the gatekeepers are arranged in a hierarchical manner the method comprising,

receiving by a first gatekeeper a Set-up command issued from a connected calling user,

performing a user location algorithm on its locally attached users and lower level gatekeepers,

if this user location algorithm fails, forwarding the call by said first gatekeeper to its higher level gatekeeper, which performs an user location algorithm on its attached users and gatekeepers except the originating gatekeeper,

if one of the user location algorithms succeeds, said higher level gatekeeper forwards said Setup message to the called user, whereupon said connection is established.

4. (New) A method for establishing a connection between a calling party and a called party in a H.323 network wherein the gatekeepers are arranged in a hierarchical manner, the method comprising:

assigning to each gatekeeper in the plurality of gatekeepers, one higher level gatekeeper;

assigning to each gatekeeper in the plurality of gatekeepers, a plurality of lower level gatekeepers,

receiving a locate request;

performing a user location algorithm responsive to the receiving a locate request to determine if the locate request can be fulfilled locally or by the plurality of lower level gatekeepers,

if the user location request cannot be fulfilled, forwarding the locate request to the higher level gatekeeper,

if the user location request can be fulfilled, forwarding the locate request to an identified lower level gatekeeper to complete the connection.

5. (New) The method of claim 4 further comprising:

receiving the locate request by the higher level gatekeeper;

performing a user location algorithm responsive to the receiving a locate request to determine if the locate request can be fulfilled locally or by a plurality of lower level gatekeepers assigned to the higher level gatekeeper,

if the user location request cannot be fulfilled, forwarding the locate request to a second higher level gatekeeper assigned to the higher level gatekeeper,

if the user location request can be fulfilled, forwarding the locate request to an identified lower level gatekeeper assigned to the higher level gatekeeper to complete the connection.

6. (New) A communications system comprising:

a plurality of gatekeepers organized in a hierarchical manner, wherein each gatekeeper is assigned one higher level gatekeeper and a plurality of lower level gatekeepers,

wherein when the gatekeeper receives a locate request, the gatekeeper performs a user location algorithm to determine if the locate request can be fulfilled locally or by the plurality of lower level gatekeepers,

if the user location request cannot be fulfilled, the gatekeeper forwards the locate request to the higher level gatekeeper,

wherein when the higher level gatekeeper receives the locate request, it performs a user location algorithm to determine if the locate request can be fulfilled locally or in a plurality of its own lower level gatekeepers,

if the user location request cannot be fulfilled, the higher level gatekeeper forwards the locate request to its own designated higher level gatekeeper.